

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 MMO-01 PER-01

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R 051540Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6174

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

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USIAC FOR IEU

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: LEAK ON RESTRUCTURING

1. ROME DAILY "LA REPUBBLICA" (LEFT) CARRIES INSIDE STORY TODAY ON "DRASTIC REDUCTIONS" OF ITALY USIS STAFFERS.

2. TRANSLATION TEXT: QUOTE DRASTIC REDUCTION OF PERSONNEL IN THE ITALIAN OFFICES OF USIS, THE U.S. CULTURAL SERVICES ABROAD. IN FACT, A CONSIDERABLE PART OF THE ITALIAN PERSONNEL WORKING IN THE SEVEN USIS OFFICES IN ROME, MILAN, GENOA, TURIN, TRIESTE, FLORENCE AND NAPLES IS ABOUT TO BE DISMISSED. SOME RUMORS EVEN GAVE IT OUT FOR CERTAIN THAT A COUPLE OF OFFICES WOULD BE CLOSED DOWN, BUT FOR THE MOMENT IT SEEMS THAT THE CUT IN USIS ACTIVITY (WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO GIVE THE MOST CORRECT AND SINCERE US IMAGE IN ITALY, THEY SAY) WILL BE LIMITED TO THE DISMISSAL OF ONE FOURTH OF THE ITALIAN STAFF. THE ACTION IS SUPPOSED TO BE TAKEN OFFICIALLY ON MONDAY THE 8TH. THE REASONS FOR THIS ACTION SEEM TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE DECISION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, FROM WHICH USIS DEPENDS, TO REDUCE THE EXPENSES ABROAD (FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS THERE HAVE

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BEEN TALKS OF FUND CUTS). THE POLEMICS ON CIA SPYING AC-

TIVITIES APPARENTLY HAVE DEALT THE FINAL BLOW, WITH USIS BEING THE FIRST VICTIM. ESTABLISHED IN ITALY IN 1946 AND LED BY CAREER DIPLOMATS, USIS HAS ITS STRONG POINTS IN ROME (ABOUT 80 EMPLOYEES; THE OFFICES ARE LOCATED IN A WING OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY) AND IN MILAN (18 ITALIAN EMPLOYEES AND TWO AMERICANS), WHILE THE OTHER FIVE OFFICES HAVE ONLY SEVEN EMPLOYEES IN ALL. UNQUOTE.

3. POST PREPARING ANSWERS TO POSSIBLE FURTHER PRESS QUESTIONS. ABILITY RESPOND LIMITED BY, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FACT THAT ANNOUNCEMENT OF REDUCTION DETAILS NOT YET MADE TO STAFF. PLAN DO SO WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS, FOLLOWING FINAL INTERVIEWS ALL ITALIAN EMPLOYEES. OUR PROCEDURAL EMPHASIS ON FAIRNESS AND CAREFUL EVALUATION HAS HELPED SUSTAIN REASONABLE MORALE BUT INEVITABLE TENSENESS AMONG STAFF REMAINS PENDING DEFINITIVE ANNOUNCEMENT. DESPITE MANY ERRORS, ARTICLE SHOWS STRONG SIGNS INSIDE KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIRMS FEARS THAT OUR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES COULD PROVIDE POLITICAL FODDER DURING THIS DELICATE PERIOD IN ITALY. AMERSON

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